

From talking to doing

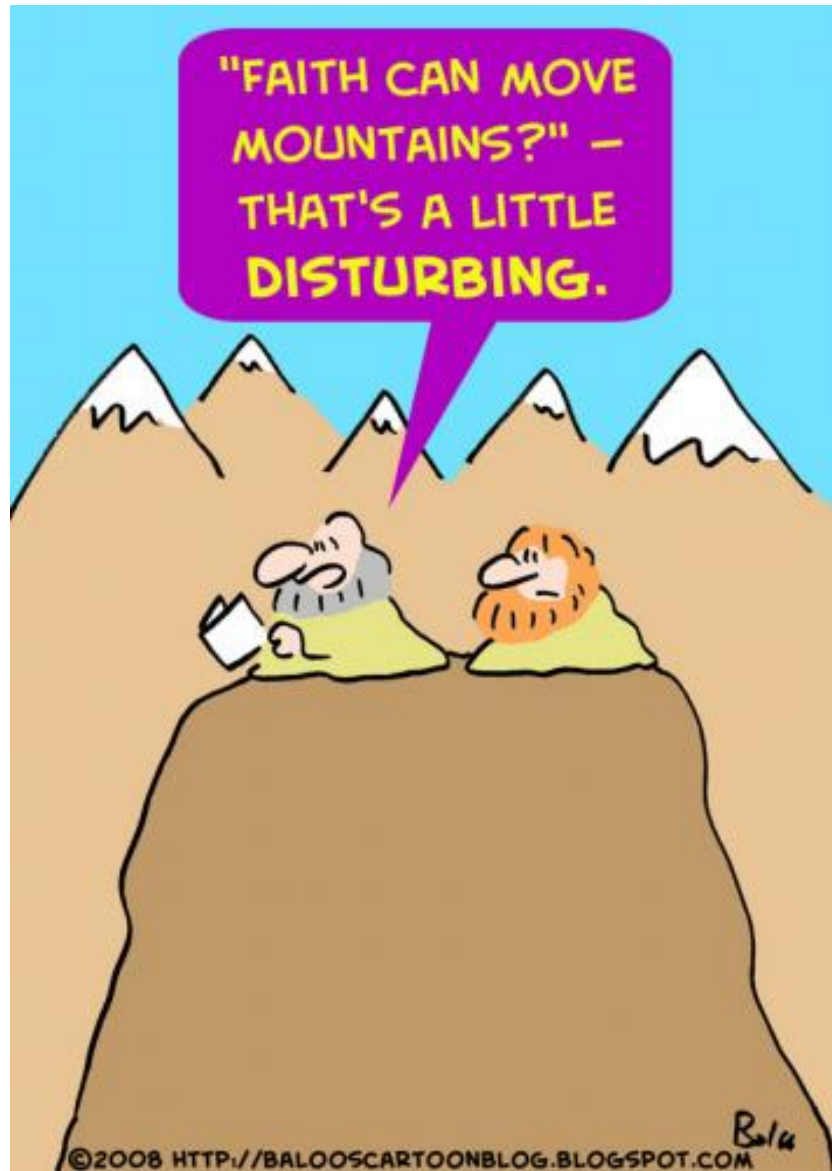
Promoting and designing embedded research & evaluation capacity in health systems

Judy Seidel, PhD
Research & Knowledge

CAHSPR 2009

The World According to Judy....

- ✦ Multidisciplinary training
- ✦ Applied researcher in AHS
- ✦ Past Director of a research services unit (CAH),
Calgary Health Region
- ✦ Decision support consultant in AHS



Early experience with embedded research

- ⊕ Research services unit in hospital (CAH)
 - ⊕ Conducted local issue-based research
 - ⊕ Medical research
 - ⊕ Health services research
 - ⊕ Capacity building – education, consulting, mentoring
 - ⊕ Staff composition - predominantly academic



The naked truth.

What did we learn?

Lesson #1

Moving a
mountain with a
melon baller!



What did we learn?

Lesson #2

Life sentence!



What did we learn?

More Lessons.....

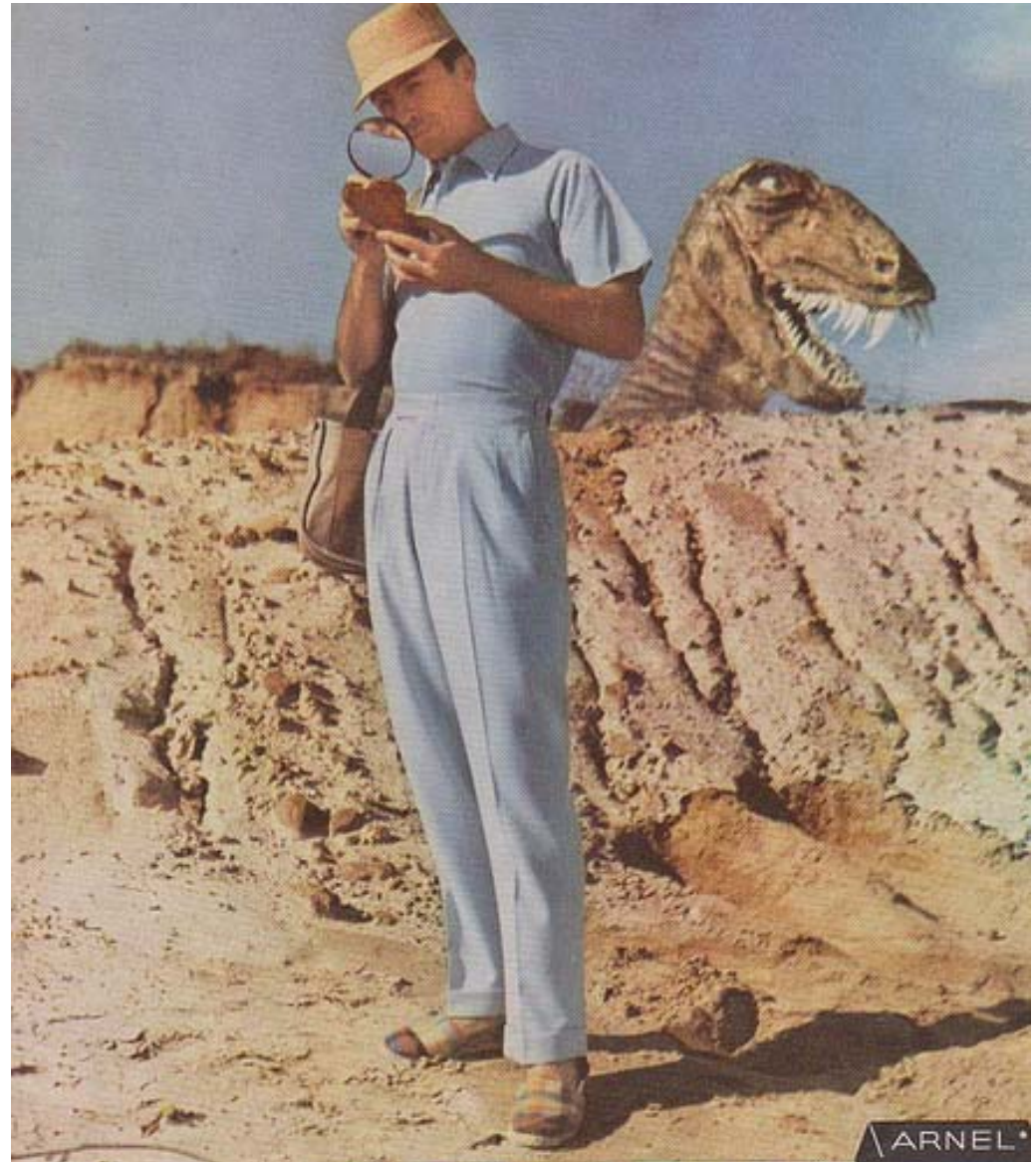
- ✦ Decision makers + researchers ≠ happiness.
 - ✦ Differing mandates, needs, expectations, cultures, and goals
- ✦ Successes were dependent on containment and a whole lot of negotiating
- ✦ Need for contextualized research evidence never decreased

Rethinking Embedded Research

Things that we know.....

- ⊕ Impact factor = applicability
 - ⊕ Issue/problem driven research
 - ⊕ Strategic importance to the corporation
 - ⊕ Timely
 - ⊕ Research - not simply a product, but a process
- ⊕ Evidence informed decision making involves the integration of many forms of evidence

Scary things can happen when you concentrate on one type of evidence for decision making!



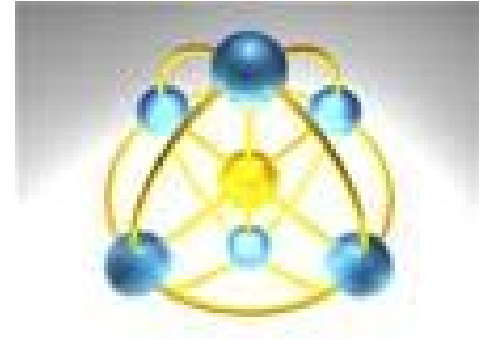
Minimum Critical Spec for Success

- ⊕ Diffusion versus active transport
 - ⊕ Researchers located in healthcare ≠ embedded research
 - ⊕ Limited cultural permeability
 - ⊕ Movement is not spontaneous but requires “energy”
 - ⊕ Mechanism for active transport – “network”
- ⊕ Team-based activities and collaborative problem solving (research, planning, policy development)
- ⊕ Tether research to business planning cycle and strategic plans

Minimum Critical Spec for Success

- ✦ Flexible (time, resources, areas of expertise)
- ✦ More than research (evaluation, consulting, analytics, metrics, education, etc.)
- ✦ High level support and leadership
- ✦ Internal research capacity
 - ✦ Networked/linked
 - ✦ Organized
 - ✦ Focused

Network-Node Business Model



- ✦ Nimble structure
- ✦ Maintain local capacities
- ✦ Accommodate 'x' number of knowledge nodes
- ✦ Promotes the integration of vertical and horizontal expertise
- ✦ Create meaningful links with external researchers (university, other agencies..)
- ✦ Requires a coordinating node
- ✦ Create decision support teams to tackle specific issues (catch and release strategy)

Challenges

- ✦ Need it yesterday
- ✦ Integration of various sources of evidence
- ✦ New methods to tackle complex system problems
- ✦ Funding and funding cycles
- ✦ Pressure to conceal results

Moving Forward

- ⊕ think differently
- ⊕ act differently
- ⊕ be creative
- ⊕ be innovative
- ⊕ take risks
- ⊕ set the trail, don't follow the path
- ⊕ and when all else fails





Cheer up! Look at me. I'm smiling and I don't even know what's going on.